

Executive Director's Report
Saskatchewan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Annual General Meeting
September 25, 2010

This past year has been interesting and challenging. Demands on the Society continue to increase, and we do not have the financial or staffing resources to meet all the needs.

We lost our lease at Market Mall effective January 31, 2010. In February 2010, we moved our office from Market Mall to the Norplex Business Centre. This office provides more suitable office space for staff and a professional image for the Saskatchewan SPCA.

Funding

The Saskatchewan SPCA has an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture to enforce the Animal Protection Act. These funds are used to investigate complaints of neglected and abused farm animals. If funds are available, \$10,000 may be used for companion animals in rural and small town Saskatchewan. However, the Farm Services Budget has been in deficit for the past two years, so no funds were available from this agreement for the welfare of companion animals.

The Saskatchewan SPCA appreciates the funding it received from the Cattle Marketing Deductions Fund (\$32,000) and Horned Cattle Trust Fund (\$12,000).

Our major fundraises are the two lotteries held in July and December. These lotteries continue to bring in much needed funds which are used for investigative services, education, prevention and public relations activities.

We have 50 individuals who make monthly donations to the Society. In March we conducted our "Work One Hour for Animals" direct mail campaign. We also have the ability to accept donations on line.

We recently purchased the eTapestry Database (donor management software) which will assist us with tracking our fund raising activities.

The Board of Directors has established a Building Acquisition Fund and a Building Committee which will explore the options of either buying or building an office and they will make recommendations about an office building.

Staffing

We had some personnel changes this past year. Ernie Spencer, Animal Protection Officer (APO), resigned in April 2009. Ian MacMillan resigned his position of Coordinator of Investigative Services in September.

The Coordinator's position description was reviewed and redesigned, to reflect the education, preventive and investigative aspects of the job. The position was reclassified as Manager of Animal Protection Services. Lloyd Howden agreed to take this position on an acting basis.

We were able to hire two fulltime Animal Protection Officers, Taija Watson and Ed Applin.

In December we hired Sandra Anderson as our Project Manager.

Investigative Services

There have been many changes in this program in the past year. In 2008, the Board conducted a review of its Investigative Services Program. The Review made recommendations to improve this program. The Board prepared a Work Plan and this past year focused on meeting the objectives of the plan.

The Board revised the Protocol for the Prioritization and Response to Calls. The two Animal Protection Officers that were hired on a full time basis has resulted in the SSPCA being more able to respond to complaints and conduct follow up inspections in a timelier manner.

We are working on improving our documentation processes. We conducted a case file audit and prioritized getting our files up to date. We have a standard for file content and continue to improve our report writing skills.

From April 01, 2009 to March 31, 2010, we received 603 complaints (338 complaints involving farm animals and 264 involving non-farm animals).

In March 2010, a training session for Animal Protection Officers was held. Maria Fuchs, Animal Health Surveillance Officer with the Ministry of Agriculture organized the session. Animal Protection Officers, Livestock Inspectors and Game Farm Investigators attended the Session. The agenda included investigative procedures, the Animal Protection Act, the Stray Animals Act, search warrant preparation and the preparation of court briefs. All those who attended felt it was a very beneficial session.

Legislation

The Ministry of Agriculture is proposing some amendments to the Animal Protection Act. In December 2009, representatives from SPCAs and Humane Societies met with representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture to discuss problems with the Act. The problem areas include:

- 1) Prohibition Section – The current Act says “No person responsible for an animal shall cause or permit the animal to be or continue to be in distress”. More appropriate wording would be “No person shall cause or permit an animal to be or continue to be in distress”.
- 2) Section 10 of the current Act states that if the person responsible for an animal seized by the humane society pays the costs incurred by the Society’s for the seizure the animal can be returned to him/her. This means that animals can be returned to the exact situation they were removed from. There should be a requirement that in addition to paying the expenses the person has to enter into a written agreement to improve conditions (meet minimal standards, as per a Code of Practice, veterinarian’s instructions) for the animal.

The plan is for the proposed amendments to the Animal Protection Act to be submitted to the Legislature in the fall of 2010.

Education/Public Relations

Our display booth was at the Saskatchewan Association Veterinary Technologists (SAVT) conference, at Agribition and the Saskatchewan Horse Federation Conference.

We held the fifth annual Animal Welfare Conference from September 25 to 27, 2009 at the Saskatoon Inn in Saskatoon. Presentations at the conference included Eden Alternative, Welfare of Horses, Dog Bite Prevention and the Care of Small Mammal Pets. The 2010 Conference will be held from September 24 to 25, 2010 in Saskatoon.

Our logo has been redesigned to better reflect the guiding principles (education, prevention and intervention) that we follow to ensure the humane treatment of animals.

Priorities for the next year include:

- 1) Hosting a meeting with government, producer organizations and related livestock industry organizations to present an Investigative Services Report and discuss issues of mutual interest.
- 2) Exploring the possibility of establishing an Industry Relations Committee.

- 3) Hosting the annual animal welfare conference.
- 4) Exploring the possible funding options for the investigation of neglected and abused animals.
- 5) Conducting a fund raising campaign to raise funds to investigate complaints of neglected and abused companion animals.
- 6) Increasing the number of monthly donors to the Saskatchewan SPCA.

A big thank you is extended to our staff, Sandra Anderson, Ed Applin, Les Buckmaster, Donna Davis, Crystal Stubbs, Twyla Polson, Karla Sieck, Barry Thiessen, Taija Watson and Ray Whitney for their hard work in helping to ensure the humane treatment of animals. I would especially like to thank Lloyd Howden for his dedication to animal welfare and his willingness to serve as our Acting Manager of Animal Protection Services.

Thank you as well to the Board of Directors, Committee members and volunteers for their dedication and commitment to animals and the SSPCA.

A special thank you to Dr. LeeAnn Forsythe Ministry of Agriculture for the advice, information and support she provides to the Society.

This coming year is going to hold many opportunities as well as challenges. In order for the Saskatchewan SPCA to achieve long term stability the Society needs a visionary Board of Directors, a broader funding base, full time staff who are adequately compensated, core programming, innovative programming and a permanent office.

I look forward to working with everyone to face our challenges as we work towards achieving long-term stability.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Wach
Executive Director